

Liberal Party

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FOR OUR CITY

1945

MUNICIPAL PROGRAM

THE LIBERAL PARTY

LIBERAL PARTY



MUNICIPAL PROGRAM

for 1945

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LIBERAL PARTY OF NEW YORK STATE

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FOREWORD

In America, municipal government is democracy in action. No phase of government touches the life of the people so extensively and intimately. We now know that human beings are profoundly influenced by immediate surroundings, but we tend to overlook the primary role of government in molding that environment in which we are born, grow up, work, play, and enact our personal careers. It is no exaggeration to say that when government in the local community becomes dishonest, prejudiced, arbitrary, and the tool of specific interests, the deepest source of our democratic way of living is corrupted.

This is particularly true in a great, complex center like New York City with its more than seven and one-half million inhabitants. Consider the depth and the range of the present activities of our city administration:

The government of the City of New York provides the buildings and equipment, the leadership, and the purposes and program for the schools and colleges in which our young are educated. Its educational system maintains over 700 public schools, it employs over 35,000 educational workers, and last year it enrolled 876,031 pupils in its schools, and 36,074 students in its four colleges.

The government of the City of New York determines the sanitary conditions under which we live; it supplies about one billion gallons of water per day to its residents; it supervises food, gas and electricity services; it operates six wholesale and nine retail markets, and it inspects the homes in which we live and the buildings in which we work.

The government of the City of New York cares for those who are physically or mentally ill in its hospitals, health centers, and child care stations; its thousands of doctors, dentists, nurses and social case workers serve millions of patients and direct a total health program which each year requires the expenditure of about fifty million dollars.

The government of the City of New York provides the very means of livelihood for those who through misfortune or other cause become destitute and dependent. Its Department of Welfare disbursed over 68 million dollars last year to needy families.

The government of the City of New York protects the property and the lives of its people against the forces of nature and the human under-world. Last year the Police Department had 16,372 employees, and its payroll was over 53 million dollars; the Fire Department had 9,973 employees, and its payroll exceeded 33 million dollars.

The government of the City of New York through its courts, its police officers, its truant and probationary officers, its social workers, and its Department of Correction deals with youthful delinquents, adult offenders, and families whose domestic troubles become a matter of public concern.

The government of the City of New York employs 5,533 persons to maintain 492 playgrounds, 241 parks, and 77 miles of parkways. Its Board of Education provides an additional 111 playgrounds, 421 recreation and community centers, and 66 indoor baths and swimming pools.

The government of the City of New York maintains the streets, the subways, the buses, and the traffic officers which make it possible for the millions of this great city to move about with speed and safety as they carry on their far-flung, interdependent activities. Its Board of Transportation in 1944-45 employed 37,158 persons and carried passengers on a total of 48,446,685,080 rides.

The government of the City of New York operates a library system which has 150 branches and sub-branches, and employs 2,162 persons. It also operates its own broadcasting station, WNYC.

Finally, the government of the City of New York determines the conditions under which its citizens exercise the basic rights of association, discussion, agitation and group social and political action. Democracy can be real only as these elementary freedoms are secure in the local community.

For twelve years New York City has enjoyed good government. The difference between the financial, cultural, and moral health of our City under the good government administration, and the shameful conditions it suffered under the earlier misrule of Tammany, is known to everybody. Today the people of the City of New York are confronted with the issue: is this type of good government through fusion to continue, or is Tammany, aided by the underworld and the Marcantonio political machine, to regain control over these extensive and vital affairs of our community?

The Liberal Party has united with the other original fusion forces to see that good government is maintained and that Tammany is not returned to power to resume its plunder and corrupt mismanagement. It is convinced that Tammany is still Tammany—and seeks the same selfish ends, by the same discredited means.

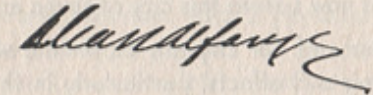
The fusion forces—composed of the Liberal Party, the City Fusion Party, the Republican Party, the Citizens Union, and the Citizens' Non-Partisan Committee—are supporting in this election a superb team of experienced candidates headed by Judge Jonah J. Goldstein, Comptroller Joseph D. McGoldrick, and Justice Nicholas M. Pette. We are confident that this group of leaders will give our city the kind of honest and progressive government it will need in the critical postwar period.

The Liberal Party presents herewith its Municipal Affairs Program. This is no superficial "vote-catching" document. It is a long-term postwar plan for the City of New York, and it suggests concretely the means and the techniques of implementation. For over six months our Municipal Affairs Committee in cooperation with specialists on various parts of the city's life has worked to develop this report. We are particularly indebted to the sub-committees which have worked so faithfully on different aspects of the program and to Dr. Harry W. Laidler, who has served as general consultant to the Committee. We are also indebted for valuable suggestions and criticisms to Dr. John Bauer, public utilities expert, Comptroller Joseph D. McGoldrick, Mr. Beardsley Ruml, and other noted authorities, who participated in certain sub-committee discussions. The program defines many concrete

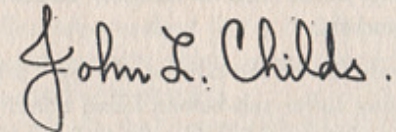
improvements—including a comprehensive program of slum-clearance and good housing—which our city can achieve under an administration of ability and integrity.

We ask our fellow-citizens to give this program critical study. We believe that those who examine it with care will agree with us that it defines concrete goals our city should strive to achieve in the fateful period now beginning. With your cooperation the Liberal Party can turn this carefully prepared program into a record of actual civic accomplishment.

Encouraged by the achievements of the last twelve years, the Liberal Party asks the good government forces to maintain their solidarity to the end that the City of New York may rank, not only as the largest, but also as the finest community in our land.



Chairman of the Municipal Affairs Committee



State Chairman of the Liberal Party





Housing

A HOUSING PROGRAM DESIGNED TO GET RID OF THE SLUMS IN OUR TIME

I. The Slums—A Challenge to Our Democracy.

The Liberal Party believes that New York City, with its great wealth, should lead the movement in our country to get rid of the slums and to provide a decent home for every family. It considers the problem of good housing the most urgent of all problems now before this city of seven and one-half million people.

The slums of our city are known the world over. For over forty years their evil effects, particularly in the lives of the young who grow to maturity amid these crowded, unsanitary, unsafe, and squalid surroundings, have been documented and widely publicized by public health leaders, educators, criminologists, and social workers.

But very few of the citizens of New York realize the vast number who today suffer sub-human living conditions in this, the wealthiest city of the world. Shortly before the outbreak of the war, more than 450,000 families, or approximately one-fourth of the people of New York City, lived in sub-standard houses. Many of these were old-law tenements, built between 1860-1900, which lacked modern improvements, were over-crowded, and measured by contemporary standards were unfit to serve as homes for human beings.

Confronted with these indefensible living conditions, the conviction developed that the problem of housing for low-income families was a public concern, and could no longer be left exclusively to private enterprise. The State Commissioner of Housing declared in an annual report to former Governor Lehman:

"Private construction has supplied no new accommodations for families in these lower income levels for more than thirty years. During this long period the dwellings available to low income families in cities and towns throughout the State have steadily grown worse so that in many areas they constitute a serious menace to the health, safety and well-being of a large section of the population and to the communities."

In 1934-35, New York City took steps to deal with its housing problem. Thereafter it secured loans and subsidies from both the Federal and State governments; it contributed subsidies in the form of tax exemption, and later also from a special occupancy tax. For a decade now it has been engaged in tearing down slums and in providing sanitary, safe, modern equipped homes for the lower paid workers.

By early 1945, it had completed 14 projects containing 17,039 apartments, and accommodating 58,100 people. It has plans for 13 other projects which will contain 17,956 apartments, and will accommodate, it is estimated, another 69,573 persons.

These 27 completed and planned projects will provide a total of 34,995 apartments, and will accommodate an estimated 127,673 people. Thus a start in good housing has been made. But it is a very modest start indeed. During the last ten years New York City has completed new homes for only a fraction over 3 percent of its people who now suffer sub-standard living conditions. It has plans for additional housing projects which, when completed, will accommodate not quite another 4 percent.

It is clear that at this rate we shall never get rid of the slums. It should be remembered that as new, modern houses are being built many old ones are becoming obsolete. The Liberal Party believes that the people of the City of New York should no longer tolerate this slow-moving program of slum clearance. It shares the view of those public leaders like our late President Roosevelt who recognize that a decent home is the right of every American family. It believes that the health of our democracy requires that these sub-standard homes be rapidly eliminated. The Liberal Party contends that our nation, with its demonstrated high productive capacity can abolish slums if it so wills and submits herewith its concrete proposals for a municipal good housing program designed to get rid of the slums in our time.

II. The Need for a Master Plan.

The Liberal Party holds that our effort to eliminate the slums of the City of New York and to replace them with the necessary housing and other facilities should be carried through in a sound, scientific manner. It believes that the preparation of a Master Plan of city redevelopment is imperative in this connection. The Charter of the city requires such a plan, but thus far no plan has been adopted. Instead we have been given a number of uncoordinated plans for specific services. This is not sufficient. Piecemeal planning cannot produce satisfactory results; specific projects should be planned with reference to city-wide requirements and possibilities. This involves a Master Plan so that all may know the general goal for the city and the broad steps by which that goal is to be attained.

As the New York City Charter indicates, a Master Plan should include the scientific development of streets, highways, public utilities and "such other features, changes and additions as will provide for the improvement of the city and its future growth and development and afford adequate facilities for the housing, transportation, distribution, comfort, convenience, health and welfare of its population."

The Liberal Party believes that it is time our great city ceased to develop in a hit and miss fashion, and employed instead foresight and common sense in the shaping of its future. It therefore calls upon the City Planning Commission to provide overall plans for city development, so that good housing projects which cannot and must not be delayed may be integrated with long-run patterns for the development of the city as a whole.

III. A \$2,700,000,000 Slum-Clearance and Good Housing Program.

The meagre results attained during the last decade clearly show that greatly augmented public funds are required if we are to make rapid progress in the slum clearance program for New York City. The Liberal Party has definite proposals for larger housing sums from both the federal and state governments. It believes, however, that New York City must also greatly increase its own

subsidies for public housing. Experience shows that an enlarged public housing program of this kind will stimulate, not hinder, private enterprise, and that it will also provide many jobs during the critical reconversion period.

Housing experts estimate that with increased costs in this postwar period \$6,000 will be required to provide a modern equipped dwelling unit for the average family. This means that a capital expenditure of \$2,700,000,000 would be sufficient to clear the slums and to provide good homes for all of the 450,000 families of our city now poorly housed. Experience has shown that the rents from the low-income tenants in public housing developments are enough to pay for all operating expenses and to cover most of the charges of amortization, spread over a 45-year period—the time assumed in these estimates. Housing experts therefore conclude that an annual cash subsidy of \$45,000,000 from city, state and federal government sources would cover all other carrying charges for a complete slum clearance program.

The Liberal Party proposes that one-half of this sum, an amount of \$22,500,000 for good housing, be provided each year by New York City itself. It believes that should the city make available this amount for slum clearance, it can reasonably expect both state and federal agencies to increase their subsidies to provide for the other half. This sum of \$22,500,000 from New York City when matched annually by an equal sum for federal and state sources could finance a complete program of slum clearance.

The measure of the sincerity of our desire to eliminate substandard homes will be revealed by the amount New York City is now ready to invest in this cause. If we really want to rid the city of the slums, we shall find the concrete means of providing this revenue. The Liberal Party's tax proposals, given in another part of this report, will indicate a variety of sources from which New York City can get this additional amount.

IV. Cooperation of the Federal Government.

The Liberal Party recognizes that its good housing program in New York City requires greater help from the federal govern-

ment. It believes it is time that our country stopped treating public housing as an experiment or as a demonstration, and began to view it as an essential part of a long-range program of national development. Rural and city slums are in direct conflict with our American democratic ideals. The Liberal Party proposes that the present sporadic, piecemeal federal authorizations be supplanted by a long-run comprehensive national plan for slum clearance.

The cities should be required to submit plans to the Federal Housing Agency showing total need in their communities, and they should be authorized to proceed with a complete re-housing program. Large-scale federal appropriations, assured over a period of years, would enable the cities to develop systematic plans for the complete rehabilitation of their slum areas as well as for the proper placement of private housing within their areas. The federal program should be designed to provide necessary loans and contributions to the cities for the assembling of land holdings and their redevelopment.

The federal act should stipulate that any state or city which undertakes a comprehensive housing program from local funds shall be eligible for a correspondingly greater share of federal loans and (or) subsidies.

V. The Share of New York State.

There are a number of important ways in which the state can participate in this slum clearance program. The Liberal Party recommends:

1. That New York State immediately review the problem of taxation in the state and take whatever steps are necessary to provide more adequate sources of income for its municipalities. With the necessary and desirable expansion of local government functions, it is imperative, as suggested elsewhere in this program, that larger revenues be made available to the local governmental units of New York State.
2. That the balance for public housing loans now authorized by the State Constitution—a sum of \$80,000,000—be immediately made available to the cities.

3. That a state referendum for additional loans and subsidies for public housing be held as soon as possible so that further funds may be made available to the various housing authorities of the state.

VI. The Need for Public Housing for Low Income Groups.

The Liberal Party recommends that the City of New York also construct homes with little or no subsidy for the next to the lowest income groups.

Thus far workers of this group have not been provided good, modern homes by private builders. There still remains a considerable gap between the economic rent in a public undertaking, and the rent a private builder has to charge to cover interest, commissions, profits, etc.

Tens of thousands of families who receive a large enough income to pay an economic rent in a public housing undertaking, but not large enough to cover the rents charged by private management should be decently housed. While the most urgent task before the public housing agencies is to provide good homes for the lowest income groups, who require a subsidy, a task of high importance is to supply this next level income group with healthful and attractive homes. Such an effort would not add a cent to the tax burden. Like all public housing, it would increase the value of all property and eventually lighten the burden of the taxpayer, reduce fire hazards, cut down the cost of police protection, and improve the health and morale of the people.

VII. Assistance to Private Owners.

The Liberal Party is likewise interested in helping that part of the population which will depend upon private housing after the war to receive a square deal. The Federal Housing Administration, by insuring against loss on FHA approved loans, has induced financial institutions to extend ready credit, which in turn has encouraged many families to purchase homes of sound construction, designed for comfortable living. However, the present law needs amendment in several respects. The Liberal Party recommends:

1. That the interest rate of four and one-half percent now permitted under the housing acts on insured loans to small home owners be lowered. It urges instead an interest charge of not more than three-fourths of one percent above the rate on federal bonds. This can be done if provision is made for meeting the reasonable cost of foreclosure proceedings.
2. That the period for amortizing loans insured by the FHA be increased to 32 years; and that safeguards be imposed so that owners do not lose their entire equity because of a single default.
3. That in case of large-scale housing financed by FHA insured loans provision be made for stores and other community facilities near the housing areas and that no projects be permitted that are not part of an integrated community.
4. That prevailing rates of wages also be paid in building small homes financed under FHA insurance, as is already required for rental and defense housing under FHA.
5. That all abuses in building resulting in unduly high costs of construction, high rents and the continuance of overcrowded housing be eliminated.

VIII. The New York City Housing Authority.

Although extensive help will be required from both the federal and state governments in carrying through this public housing program, the Liberal Party believes that primary responsibility and initiative properly belongs with the New York City Housing Authority. Subject to the observance of sound financing methods and standards of construction, authority should be lodged with this agency. Only as supervision and interference by federal and state governments is held to the minimum can developments best adapted to the needs of this great city be provided.

The Liberal Party believes that the New York City Housing Authority must reorganize if it is to be equipped to direct this vast public housing program. It recommends that this Housing Authority:

1. Overcome the tendency to be complacent about the very modest and basically inadequate public housing program which we have developed during the past decade.
2. Cooperate with the City Planning Commission in the development of a Master Plan of city redevelopment.
3. Resume its long neglected duty of investigating housing shortages, and of serving as the responsible medium through which all housing recommendations are made. In the field of housing it should function as the people's advocate, not merely as their financial agent.
4. Encourage, wherever possible, mutual or cooperative home ownership. It should urge that loans for mutual home ownership projects be authorized up to 100 percent with FHA insurance.
5. Cooperate in helping veterans with their difficult housing problems as they return to civilian life.
of civilian living.
6. Advise prospective home-owners on matters concerning the purchase of homes.
7. Plan for good housing accommodations for families which may be displaced in any of the redevelopment projects.
8. Develop a staff able to carry the much heavier burdens involved in the efficient management of the public housing program which must be undertaken in the postwar period.



Public Education

PUBLIC EDUCATION: THE FIRST BUSINESS OF OUR CITY

The Liberal Party regards our free, non-sectarian, public school system as both the most distinctive product and the finest resource of our democratic way of living. It notes with satisfaction that public education from the standpoint of the number of workers and the size of its budget out-ranks all of the other services of the City of New York. But it holds that public education in the postwar period must assume far greater responsibilities for the conservation and the enrichment of our democratic heritage.

In basic objectives, the Liberal Party believes the public educational system of our city has been working along essentially sound lines. It shares the conviction of our public school leaders that there is no inherent conflict between liberal and vocational education; between an education designed to give our young an appreciation of the spiritual achievements of the race and an education focused on the complex problems of the modern world; between an education devoted to the liberation of the powers and the understanding of the individual and an education devoted to vocational competence, community welfare, and national and human progress.

I. Equalizing Educational Opportunity.

In order to strengthen the public schools for the additional difficult tasks they must assume in these days of transition when our country is adjusting its historic outlooks and practices to the new world which science and technology have created, the Liberal Party recommends:

1. The development of an integrated program of vocational and cultural education. All of our children must be prepared to earn a living through some form of socially useful work; all must be prepared for the responsibilities of citizenship in our democratic society; all must be equipped for worthy home membership and for a creative use of their leisure time. We oppose, as contrary to the principles of our democracy, a dual school system with one set of schools designed, not to give intellectual background and insight, but to train the masses in mechanical skills and attitudes of docile obedience, and another to equip an elite group to occupy the posts of social leadership and of government. The democratic ideal demands a public educational program which seeks to give each and every child a chance for all-round growth, and opportunity for the full development of his capacities.
2. The construction of an enriched and diversified curriculum which will give the young an increasing understanding of international and domestic problems—economic, social and political. The schools should give opportunity for first-hand participation in the solution of community problems, with due regard for the differing capacities of the various age-groups. Above all in this great city, with its many and varied racial, religious, and cultural groups, opportunity should be provided for the widest possible sharing of experience, and for growth in mutual understanding and appreciation.
3. The abolition of multiple sessions and over-crowding in the schools; the reduction in class size in the elementary and high schools to a maximum of thirty. In underprivileged areas the maximum class size should be twenty-five. Without these improvements it is idle to pretend that all of our children enjoy equal educational opportunity.
4. Increased health services for all school children who need them, including more adequate dental and medical care. Education in the selection of balanced diets and the nutritional values of different foods. Subsidized lunches for all

who wish them. (See health report.)

5. The extension of kindergarten, pre-kindergarten, and nursery schools to all areas where need for these services exists.
6. The provision in connection with all schools of well-equipped, up-to-date playgrounds, with adequate staffs of leaders; a program of public school camping which will give each child a chance to benefit from camp experience.
7. The adoption of a building program for the replacement of all unsafe, unsanitary, and obsolete school buildings, and the construction of additional schools in congested and growing areas of the city.
8. An increase in the number of higher educational institutions of the city, more adequate equipment for already existing colleges, and direct state aid for higher education.
9. An increase in the number and the amount of scholarships to municipal colleges with the purpose of making available to all students of demonstrated ability the same educational opportunity now enjoyed by the high income families.
10. Special provision for educational opportunity at all school levels for returning veterans.

II. Adult Education.

The Liberal Party is convinced that the public schools and colleges of the City of New York must assume a primary responsibility in the field of adult education. To promote literacy, responsible citizenship, social understanding, and useful, prosperous and happy personal experience for adults, it recommends:

1. Provision of adequate facilities and a concerted effort to wipe out illiteracy, to prepare 600,000 non-citizens for naturalization examinations, and to insure knowledge of English, and to furnish other tools of learning to every person who has reached maturity without them.
2. Opportunities to improve their schooling for veterans and the young who have left school prematurely.

3. A broad and varied program which will enlighten adults on public questions and social relationships, so that they shall be better qualified to carry their full responsibilities as parents and citizens in our democratic society.
4. Training for efficient work in jobs, including homemaking.
5. Opportunities for learning better to pursue legitimate personal interests, meet individual needs, and insure personal growth through creative and satisfying activity and learning experiences.
6. Guidance and advice for adult students.
7. The organization and development of a department of adult education in the Board of Education and the Board of Higher Education with directors and corps of full-time teachers and administrative assistants.
8. Specialized training for the development of workers in adult education.
9. Administrative integration to insure full use of buildings and other facilities, and a creative relationship to the education of children and youth.
10. The use of state reimbursement for adult education, for the expansion of adult education programs, and additional city appropriations on an increasing scale.

III. For More Democratic and Efficient Educational Administration.

The Liberal Party believes that the educational program of the City of New York suffers seriously because of certain defects in the present internal administration of the system. It considers the causes of these weaknesses to be four-fold.

1. **City Purse Interferes With Educational Policy.** Our schools are run on revenue provided by both the state and the city. The city is required by statute to supply a percentage of the assessed value of its real estate to the educational system. This statutory minimum is woefully low, and, for years, the city's share of the educational budget has been considerably

above the minimum statutory requirement. The Mayor has used the city's power to grant or withhold these additional appropriations as one means of exerting an improper influence over the policies and activities of the school system. This use of the purse to dictate educational policy violates the American principle of keeping the control of our schools free from partisan political forces.

In order to get rid of political interference, the Liberal Party recommends the strict observance of the provisions and spirit of the law which lodges the formulation and administration of educational policy and program exclusively in the educational authorities.

2. **Inadequate Lay Leadership.** One of the most distinctive features of American education is the role played in determining basic educational policy by local lay boards. Unfortunately, in New York City many of the individuals appointed to the Board of Education have lacked the initiative, the social understanding, and the statesmanship required to make our educational lay authority independent, fearless, and competent to discharge its public responsibilities. Only as the Mayor appoints to the Board of Education men and women of character, of scientific attitude, of democratic outlook, and of public spirit, can New York City have superior education. Above all, the members of the Board should be eager to consult with parents and with teachers about the various aspects of our huge educational undertaking, and should ever remember that they are the representatives, not the masters, of the public. Budget and other important hearings should not be perfunctory as at present.

The splendid leadership given by a few of the members shows what could be accomplished were the whole Board of Education composed of persons of outstanding personal and educational qualifications. The Liberal Party demands that in the future the Mayor use his appointing power to secure this kind of lay leadership for the educational program of our schools and colleges. Having appointed such a Board of

Education, the city administration should use its power to protect, not to impair, its autonomy.

3. **Confused and Inadequate Administrative Leadership.** A public school system which employs over thirty-five thousand teachers can be progressive and healthy only if it is led by administrative leaders of integrity and educational ability who know what their particular fields of responsibility are. Many harmful habits and attitudes in present administrative practice thwart the effective administration of the school system. At times, as in the Mark Starr case, the Board of Education substitutes its lay judgment for the judgment properly belonging to the Superintendent and his associates.

The Liberal Party urges that as soon as a vacancy occurs, an outstanding educational leader be chosen by the Board of Education to serve as Superintendent of Schools, and that under his leadership the administrative department be reorganized. Spheres of responsibility should be clearly defined and put in the hands of high-minded administrative leaders who are able to cooperate with both the teaching and supervisory staffs, and who are willing, after due consultation, to accept, not evade, responsibility for making and carrying out decisions. The Liberal Party also advocates that the Board of Education confine its attention to the functions which properly belong to a lay group, and that it abstain from interfering with the functions which should be carried by the professional staff.

4. **Low Morale in Teaching Force.** As would be expected, these unsatisfactory conditions in the top lay and professional leadership have bred harmful attitudes and practices among the rank and file educational workers. New York City has very many able and devoted workers on both its teaching and supervisory staffs, and it has many excellent schools. On the other hand, it also has many time-servers in its personnel. Although the school system is under the merit system, many of the best teachers grow discouraged when they note how often the person who plays it "safe" and who carries favor

with administrative superiors is promoted, while the alert, public-spirited worker is passed by.

The Liberal Party hails the teachers who have developed teacher organizations and through their organizations have promoted the welfare of the children by improving the conditions in the schools and by resisting the tendency to opportunism and defeatism. It recognizes that many teachers of public spirit have assumed excessive burdens in carrying the dual load of both classroom work and leadership in these educational organizations. It believes that improvements in the top leadership of the schools can do much to encourage and inspire those school teachers who have labored to see that "what the wisest parent would want for his child" shall be the experience of all the children in our supreme democratic institution—the public school.



Health

A HEALTH PROGRAM FOR SEVEN AND ONE-HALF MILLION PEOPLE

The health of all of its inhabitants is one of the major concerns of the government of the City of New York.

Many of the city's services are calculated to prevent sickness; others to cure those who have become ill. The activities of the city relating to housing and city planning, parks, playgrounds, water supply, sanitation, food inspection, recreation, education, etc., all have a vital effect on disease prevention.

The City of New York likewise engages extensively in curative health services. It spends over forty million dollars a year on medical and surgical care for those who cannot afford to pay, and additional millions for equipment and services utilized by applicants regardless of income.

Despite these developments, however, there is still great need for additional city health services of a preventive and curative nature. Leaders of the medical profession declare that the average family receives only one-half the medical care it should have. In New York City alone 165,000 persons are confined to their beds every day, 45,000 in hospitals and the remainder at home. As for dental defects, it is estimated that 95 percent of children of five years or over are suffering from such defects and are in need of treatment.

As a means of directing a frontal attack on sickness and disease in the City of New York, both with the view of prevention and the view of cure, the Liberal Party recommends:

I. Coordination of Health Services.

The Liberal Party believes that all agencies, private and public, which deal in activities affecting the health of the people of the city, should work together for the common end of curing and

preventing disease and of raising health standards. It is particularly important that the Department of Health and the Department of Hospitals work in close cooperation with each other and with other public and private health agencies.

II. Adoption of Health Insurance Plan of Greater New York.

Leaders in the medical profession estimate that the average family receives only one-half of the medical care it needs. Families of moderate and low income face an acute financial and medical situation. Medical costs are uneven and unpredictable. It is impossible for the individual to budget them. The solution lies in the application of group insurance to the cost of medical care—that is to say, in spreading the risk of sickness expense over the many. The Liberal Party, therefore, vigorously supports the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill, including its plan for a comprehensive federal health insurance program. However, until this federal plan or some satisfactory state plan is enacted, the Liberal Party urges the participation of the city government in a special health insurance plan for all of its employees. With the objectives in mind of comprehensive coverage, group practice, and preventive medicine, the Liberal Party endorses the Health Insurance Plan of Greater New York.

Under this Plan the City pays two percent of its payroll for all of its employees whose salaries are under \$5000. The employees pay a similar amount. The benefits available under this plan cover all types of doctors' services, whether in the office, home, or hospital. Hospitalization is provided at the semi-private level through the existing contract with the Associated Hospital Service. Besides various curative services, those insured will be entitled to all known preventive measures.

III. Increased Hospital Services.

The Liberal Party recommends an increase in the city's hospital facilities in order to provide adequate service to the people in every section of the city. The Hospital Council of Greater New York, a semi-official planning agency, is now at work on a Master Plan for hospitals and related facilities for the City of New York, a plan which, it declares, will point out ways and means for pro-

viding a well-planned system of hospitals and other health institutions, and which will seek to coordinate hospital development with other civic needs and facilities. The Liberal Party welcomes the formulation of this Master Plan for hospitals and urges the city administration to give it, when completed, its most careful consideration. The Liberal Party also notes the proposed new hospitals which the city has scheduled for construction following the war, as well as the proposed medical centers to be built under city and private auspices. The ultimate responsibility for seeing to it that adequate plans are made for the necessary hospitals for the city rests with the Hospital Department, cooperating with the City Planning Commission.

In connection with the program for hospitals and allied institutions, the Liberal Party wishes to emphasize the great need of providing:

1. An increase in modern bed space for general hospitalized patients, and for the chronically ill.
2. Better treatment of and clinical facilities for cancer, tuberculosis, cardiac cases, and maternal and infant health.
3. Adequate hospital space and funds devoted solely to medical and public health research.
4. Adequate modern facilities for psychiatric observational purposes and treatment.
5. A carefully planned building program for the care of the mentally defective and disturbed. Reorganization of every phase of psychiatric treatment—from training to therapy.
6. More numerous evening clinics for treatment in all fields.

IV. Additional Health Centers.

The Liberal Party commends the expansion of City Health Centers during the last decade, and it believes that these centers should be readily accessible to all parts of the city. In such centers there should be, as soon as practicable:

- 1) A staff of general practitioners and specialists, equipped with diagnostic and laboratory facilities, and charged with the task of curing the sick and preventing illness; 2) psychiatric consultants; 3) dentists and dental facilities; 4) baby clinics; 5) an

informational service on available city resources and referral facilities; 6) facilities for the treatment of venereal disease.

Such centers should be utilized by the clients of the voluntary Health Insurance Plan of Greater New York, and by others in need, under varying conditions prescribed by the city government.

V. Improved Health Services in Public Schools.

The Liberal Party recommends that the school system take a more active part in the improvement of the health of the pupils and of the community generally by:

1. Inclusion in the educational program for elementary and secondary school teachers of courses descriptive of existing community and health services and the need for cooperation between schools and these services.
2. Provision of periodic physical examinations by a Board of Health physician for every pupil in an elementary and secondary school. At present nurses give cursory examinations to elementary school children, without a follow-up, while in high schools no examination is regularly given either by a nurse or a doctor. On the individual principal's initiative in a high school, each child may be asked to pay twenty-five cents for which he obtains a good general examination, audiometer, eye and foot examination. Sometimes a chest X-ray is included; sometimes this last service is offered for one dollar. The existence of these examinations, however, depends solely on the initiative of the principal. Vocational high schools are the only ones which have comprehensive examinations. These, however, are only experimental in nature. Physical examinations in grammar and high schools must be thorough and frequent and must include all pupils. There must also be adequate follow-up treatment.
3. Increasing dental care in the public schools. It has been estimated that the city could provide dental care for its children at the rate of \$4.50 per person per annum, this amount decreasing because the pupils who were already given initial care requiring 3 hours a year, needed, in succeeding years, but 1 hour of maintenance care.

VI. Better Dental Service.

The Liberal Party recommends an amendment to the New York State Insurance Law so as to permit the inclusion of dental service in medical insurance plans.

VII. More Adequate Pay.

The Liberal Party demands adequate pay for all those engaged in health work for the city. Pay commensurate with work performed is essential if the best available medical talent is to be secured. In many phases of our health services the remuneration is shamefully low. In our health centers, for instance, physicians serve for three hours a week in return for a wage of \$5.00, a wage scale the same as that existing in 1898. A similar situation exists in the case of dentists employed by the city in these centers, their compensation being only \$18.00 a week for three sessions of three hours each.

VIII. Regulation of Subsidized Institutions.

The Liberal Party recommends that the city exercise a stricter supervision over the institutions to which it gives financial aid. Many of these agencies do not live up to modern standards. The municipal authorities should cooperate with state authorities in improving institutional administration.

IX. Freedom of Expression.

With a view to remedying defects in the organization and conduct of the health services, and to making such services increasingly effective, the Liberal Party urges that the city officials and the members of the medical and allied services encourage freedom of speech within city departments and city-controlled institutions. In many cases today freedom of expression is stifled, resulting in lower morale and the continuance of wasteful, inefficient and outmoded practices.

X. Policy of Non-Discrimination.

The Liberal Party stands for a policy of non-discrimination on account of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry in the training and hiring of men and women wishing to enter the health services of the city and in the giving of health services to those in need of them.



Social Services

THE EXPRESSION OF THE COMMUNITY THROUGH ITS SOCIAL SERVICES

Today social services are recognized as an essential part of municipal administration. Certain social services are required by every inhabitant of the city; others are needed only by families with children; still others are required by individuals or families only when misfortune overtakes them; or in cases where heredity, environment, disorganized family life or faulty education in childhood have put serious handicaps on the individual.

The various public social services constitute no mean part of the standard of living of the people, but, of course are no substitute for security in employment.

In order to strengthen these indispensable social service activities in our community, the Liberal Party recommends:

I. An Expanded Program of Recreation. Closely allied with the educational and health services is recreation. It contributes to health, safety, education, welfare, and citizenship.

The City of New York increased its recreational activities very considerably in the period between the two World Wars. In many sections of New York, however, facilities for play are still inadequate, and necessary recreational leadership is lacking. Indoor recreational centers, especially for adults, are few and far between and there is also need for greater cooperation on the part of the city departments and of private agencies.

The Liberal Party advocates:

1. The development of a postwar program of parks, playgrounds and play fields, and of indoor recreational centers, as a part of a Master Plan for the city. Such facilities should be brought in line with generally accepted national standards and should be readily available to children and adults in every section of the city.

2. The furnishing of adequate equipment and leadership for all of the recreational centers of the city so that they may be used throughout the entire year.
3. The adoption of a cooperative program for the planning and operation of all playgrounds and other recreational centers. Under this cooperative plan, among other things, there could be a better exchange of recreational leaders between the parks and educational departments. Today, while the Park Department, with relatively few indoor play centers, employs some 450 full-time recreation leaders, the Board of Education, with many indoor facilities, employs comparatively few full-time leaders.
4. The creation of a Commission on Recreation consisting of representatives of public agencies concerned with leisure-time activities and of voluntary agencies, such as settlements and other recreation centers. Its purpose would be to devise plans for effective coordination of recreational activities in the city, and to consider the need for a permanent Recreation Department with the responsibility of administering all recreational activities of the city government.

II. Assistance in Times of Distress. The city likewise has for years cooperated with the state and federal governments in providing for those in economic distress due to the incapacity or absence of the breadwinner of the family, because of unemployment, old age, blindness or illness.

It is not in the power of the city to establish compulsory social insurance systems when the state or federal governments have failed to act. Beyond offering what support the municipal administration may be able to give to the promotion of a more complete system of social insurance, the city must content itself with giving the best possible administration to the public assistance program for which it carries a responsibility. The Department of Welfare in the city now handles public assistance for dependent children and their dependent parents, for the blind, aged, for certain classes of veterans and for "general relief" from whatever causes.

The relief standards of the city have improved during the last decade, but should be increased so as to provide for recreation and other services. The children of those on relief and unable to work should not be forced to suffer because of conditions beyond the control of their family. A more adequate allowance would make for a better future generation.

The Liberal Party advocates a Welfare Department staff sufficient to meet the needs of this important branch of government and an adequate family relief budget for food, clothing, recreational and incidental needs.

It recommends likewise the enactment of the recommendations of the Moore Commission which require the state and federal governments to provide at least 80 percent of the monies given by the city for relief and dependency instead of the present 40 to 50 percent.

III. Strengthened Social Case Work and Guidance. The need for social case work and guidance is rarely divorced from any form of relief or economic assistance. We as a city have only partially accepted responsibility for social case services, and often, when these services have been undertaken, they have been limited by ancient traditions, incompetent workers, and small budgets. Some public provision for social case work and its affiliated mental hygiene and psychiatric services has been made in the treatment of the mentally ill and those in difficulty with the law in the criminal courts.

For the remainder, social case work and guidance in our public departments rest on the good will and on the far too limited resources of private philanthropy. Our city government does not adequately provide such services for those who are on public assistance rolls, those in our courts and penal institutions, those in our public school system, those handicapped by old age and solitary existence, those requiring friendly guidance and assistance in personnel and family relations, or those receiving medical care in public hospitals and clinics. In the school system, for instance, the city has extended its social case work so slowly that at present, with a register of approximately 844,000 children, there are only

68 social work positions (21 of which are not filled), a ratio of 1 to 12,500. The 1940 White House Conference on Children in a Democracy recommended one social worker to every 1500 children.

The Liberal Party urges:

1. The strengthening of the program of the individual services by the Department of Welfare, the Hospital Department and the Court system.
2. Recognition by the city administration and the Board of Education that the social worker is an essential part of the educational team which contributes to the development of the whole child, linking the classroom to the home and the community.
3. Closer coordination of services within the Division of Child Welfare and the Board of Education.
4. Assignment of at least one social worker to each public school.
5. Raising of the requirements of Attendance Officers to a professional social work level.

IV. Increased Services to Children. In the social service activities of the city, state and nation, special attention must be given to the welfare of the children, upon whose well-being depends the future of our country. The Liberal Party has set forth in some detail the programs which, in its opinion, the city should adopt for children as well as adults in the fields of education, of health, of recreation, of social case work and guidance. The Liberal Party also recommends:

1. The provision of services, such as day care and nursery care, for pre-school children of working mothers.
2. Supplementary care for school-age children of working mothers, with adequate provision for food and special health services.
3. The development of shelters for children during the mother's stay in the hospital or during her convalescence. These shelters should be within easy reach of each district, not centralized in any one part of the city.
4. Extended in-home care and out-of-home treatment facilities for the emotionally disturbed child.
5. A sufficient number of well-equipped foster homes for children

who, for health or economic reasons, cannot be cared for by their families.

6. Cooperation of the city with the state in the strict enforcement and strengthening of all child labor protective laws.

V. More Adequate Provision for Delinquent Children. The problem of juvenile delinquency is bound up inseparably with the health and well-being of society as a whole. The delinquent child is, in large part, a reflection of an unhealthy economic, social, and cultural situation. The war, which led to many social maladjustments, has greatly increased the number of child delinquents in the city and country. In the social turmoil that may well follow the war, the problem will remain a serious one for many years to come.

The Liberal Party believes that the City of New York should do all in its power to protect the normal child against the individual and social forces making for delinquency and to restore the delinquent child to a useful life in society. Besides continuing to strengthen its positive housing, health, leisure time and other services, the city should develop, as a means of dealing with this question, adequate protective services; a close working relationship between social agencies, schools, health agencies, the police, the courts, welfare and recreational agencies; with thorough public responsibility taken for homeless and illegitimate children, children whose homes are broken, and children with physical and mental handicaps.

There should be adequate crime prevention bureaus, juvenile aid bureaus, children's courts with competent personnel, and a humane domestic relations policy. There should be a sufficient number of well-equipped temporary shelters in each section of the city; trained and sympathetic police, parole, probation and truancy officers, training schools and facilities for maladjusted young people, and good vocational training and placement and rehabilitation services for delinquents.

Children must be removed from jails. Psychiatric clinical services for the maladjusted must be extended. Laws relating to the supervision of institutions, child placement agencies, and foster homes must be strictly enforced, and provision must be made for

adequate standards of care.

The Liberal Party advocates the reorganization of the system of Children's Courts in New York City to make available a more adequate and individualized service than is now obtained. This would include an adequate and competent staff, sufficient clerical help, and judges selected for their special knowledge and skill in the treatment of children.

The Liberal Party recommends the modernization of the state institutions for the care of the child declared to be delinquent, to the end that these institutions may meet the physical, emotional and intellectual needs of these children. These institutions should be equipped with a carefully selected and well trained after-care (parole) staff concerned with the rehabilitation of the youngster after his discharge from the state institution.

Finally, there should be federal, state and community coordination of planning for the handling and the extension of child welfare agencies.

VI. Human Resources Planning Board. At the present time in the City of New York we have a City Planning Commission which in a large measure devotes itself to the planning of the physical resources and services. We have given little attention, however, to the coordination of those services which deal with the conservation of our human resources.

Today, the planning for the protection, the development and the readjustment of the individual within the City of New York is being undertaken by a large variety of public and private agencies—each with its special interests. Much good work is being done, but there is also much overlapping, with consequent waste, confusion and ineffectiveness.

The Liberal Party joins with many social workers and other citizens in urging the creation in New York City of a Human Resources Planning Board, with appropriate sub-divisions, with the object of coordinating the social service efforts rendered by the city, state and federal governments, of evolving a comprehensive and balanced plan of social service activities and of assisting in any way within its power in the intelligent conservation and the all-around development of the human resources within our city.



Delinquency

YOUTH AND THE TREATMENT OF CRIME

The Liberal Party believes that New York City should move at once to improve its present methods for the treatment of adolescent, younger adult, and adult offenders.

The situation with youthful offenders, those within the 16-25 year age groups, is a tragic one. Those in the 16-18 year group comprise but 5 percent of the population, but in the year immediately before the war, this group was responsible for more than 30 percent of the burglaries, and perpetrated more than 33 percent of the auto thefts. In 1944, according to the Police Department statistics, they represented 43 percent of alleged burglars and 39 percent of those charged with auto thefts. In 1940 they comprised 21 percent of those in all age groups charged with rape; in 1944 the figure had risen to 37 percent. In 1940 they comprised 15 percent of those accused of robbery; in 1944, 25 percent. In 1944 those in the 16-18 group were accused of almost 40 percent of the criminal behavior of all age groups in New York City charged with such offenses against persons and property as burglary, rape, robbery, and auto theft.

Almost 40 percent of the prisoners in state penal and correctional institutions made their first contact with law enforcement agencies between the ages of 16 and 20. Similarly, the majority of youthful offenders repeat their offenses or commit new crimes within a short time after their release from institutions.

It is evident from these facts that present methods of dealing with young offenders are not producing socially desirable results, and that everything possible should be done to improve the methods by which young offenders are handled at their earliest encounter with police and the courts.

The first step in improving our methods of dealing with the adolescent and young offender is the recognition of the fact that his behavior, as has been indicated before, is a symptom of the disorganization in the economic, social, and psychological life of the young offender. Experience accentuates the futility of any one-sided attack or supposed panacea, such as punishment. It is necessary to reach, diagnose, and exert social control over the vulnerable individual before his behavior becomes overt and anti-social. To an extent perhaps not hitherto fully appreciated, the incidence of crime in a large community like New York City reflect the manner in which its citizens have coordinated their preventive activities and used the facilities that private and public agencies (other than prisons, reformatories, and penitentiaries) offer for the treatment of known offenders. A coordinated over-all plan should be formulated for an attack on the problem of the youthful criminal. In making such an attack, the delicate nature of the period of adolescence—a period of growing physical strength, and of ill-defined ambitions and strivings which are inadequately controlled by the prudence we require of adults—should be thoroughly understood.

In dealing with the problem of youthful and adult offenders, the Liberal Party recommends a concerted plan for:

1. The creation of a system of Youth Courts in which those within the age-group of 16 to 21 may be handled from the moment of their arrest to the last moment of their probation or parole. These courts, unaffiliated with any other tribunal, should be staffed by their own separate skilled and trained personnel; that is, judges, probation officers, psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers.
2. The establishment of a series of small institutional units consisting of farms, hostels, vocational schools, hospitals for the mentally disturbed, training centers for the mentally defective, and reformatories. These too should possess staffs well equipped to deal with the unresolved problems encountered in the restless age of youth. In both the court and the system of correction, the staffs should exercise a scientific spirit of inquiry, and

the treatment given should be closely related to the discovered causes of the anti-social behavior in each case.

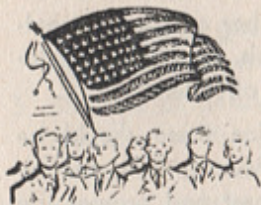
3. The use of periods of probation or custody for the young offender of the indeterminate variety, the length of time required for this period of adjustment depending on the progress made by the offender. Whether the young offender is placed on probation or in custody, every effort should be made to secure his rehabilitation through educational courses, vocational training, and other activities.
4. For the adult offender, as a substitute for the large congregate institutions, such as prisons and penitentiaries of the high-walled type, with their huge populations of 2,000 to 3,000 inmates; the creation by the state, as appropriate adjuncts or treatment arms of the city's Criminal Courts, of another chain of small units not unlike those designed for the younger age groups.

Large prisons and penitentiaries have failed to produce more than a very small percentage of reformed or rehabilitated offenders, for in them among other things, the individualized approach to treatment must necessarily yield to the mass punitive approach. For time out of reckoning this type of treatment has notoriously failed to readjust the offender; on the contrary, in large numbers of cases it has served to school him in more ambitious forms of crime.

5. The utilization for the rehabilitation of the adult offender, as well as the youthful and child offender, of all practicable therapeutic measures—economic, social, and psychological—with a view to restoring to free society as many rehabilitated people as possible. The doctrine of punishment—thoroughly overrated and ineffective as a deterrent of crime—would be supplanted by the doctrine of treatment.
6. The maintenance of youthful offenders in institutional or treatment units separate from adults, instead of the indiscriminate commingling of the two in many existing institutions in the state. The segregation of first or casual offenders, in both groups, from chronic offenders.

7. The establishment of an increasing number of special treatment centers, such as farms, trade schools, road and forestation camps, for both youthful and adult offenders.

Under the proposed system of correction there should be accorded to the courts an opportunity to ascertain fully, for the first time, the factors in each offender's past and present life which elicited criminal behavior, and there should be accorded to the offender the opportunity and tools, also perhaps for the first time, to redirect his emotional energies into socially useful and desirable channels.



Discrimination

A CITY FREE FROM DISCRIMINATION

The Liberal Party is unalterably opposed to discrimination against any individual or group on account of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry. It holds that the government of the City of New York should make full use of its power and influence to eliminate discriminatory practices from our community.

In pursuance of this end:

I. The Liberal Party recommends the appointment by the Mayor of a representative New York City Anti-Discrimination Committee. This Committee should be authorized to employ an adequate professional staff and should be empowered:

- a. To examine the practices of each of the city departments and of all facilities subsidized by the city in their treatment of members of various racial, religious and national origin groups;
- b. To make recommendations for the abolition of discriminatory practices;
- c. To act as a center of public information and of constructive activity at all times, so that false rumors and misunderstandings which might lead to rioting and other disorders may be avoided or be promptly and properly handled if they should occur.

This Committee should also function as a local council in co-operation with the New York State Commission Against Discrimination. Where the recommendations of this Anti-Discrimination Committee require supporting legislation by the City Council, such support should be promptly given.

II. The Liberal Party recommends that the city shall pursue a non-discriminatory labor policy in every phase of its activity. In particular the Liberal Party affirms:

- a. **Public employment.** There must be no discriminatory employment practices in any department of the city.
- b. **City contracts.** No contracts should be awarded by the city to any individual, corporation, partnership, association or organization found by the City Anti-Discrimination Committee to be engaged in discriminatory practices.
- c. **Housing.** There should be no discrimination in low-rent housing and slum clearance projects. The city should strictly enforce its law prohibiting discrimination by private housing projects that receive tax-exemption or (and) other benefits from the city. Negroes should be adequately represented in official Housing and City Planning Commissions.
- d. **Health and hospitals.** Qualified members of all groups, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin or ancestry, should be employed in hospitals and health centers, as physicians, technicians, nurses and general medical personnel. All discrimination against Negro or any other patients should cease. City funds should be denied to any institution in the field of public health that discriminates because of consideration of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry. New and enlarged health education programs and added facilities for the treatment of tuberculosis, cancer and social diseases should be established in Harlem and in other areas where adequate facilities are lacking.
- e. **Education and recreation.** The school system should provide more adequate training in race relations and democracy for school personnel, parents and pupils. A "New York" Plan including the best features of the "Springfield" Plan to improve community relations should be developed. Racial bias in school textbooks and in the attitudes of all school personnel should be eliminated. The curriculum should include instructional material on the contribution of all cultures to America and to the world. Qualified persons, irrespective of their antecedents, race, color or creed, should sit on the Board of Education and on the boards which determine the policy of the educational system. Existing educational and recreational facilities and

special services should be extended in all underprivileged areas.

- f. **Crime prevention.** City funds should not be made available to any child-care institution which violates the City Race Discrimination Law. A more adequate crime-prevention program should be undertaken by the city with special reference to eliminating inter-racial, inter-faith and inter-cultural tensions.



Basic Freedoms

FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF THE BASIC FREEDOMS

The Liberal Party reaffirms its unswerving devotion to the rights of freedom of speech, of press, of assembly, of free association, and of religious worship. These liberties must be zealously guarded by municipal, as well as by state and federal governments, if we are to preserve and advance our democratic way of life. And we must see to it that all of our people enjoy these rights and freedoms equally, irrespective of race, color, religion, national origin, or ancestry.

In the tense days, during and following World War I, many of our civic authorities, at the behest of reactionary elements, denied organized labor, and numerous other legal minority groups, rights guaranteed to them by the Constitution. In the unsettled days following this War, similar reactionary forces are organizing to bring strong pressure to bear on the government to interfere with the right of labor and other democratic groups to meet, to speak, to write, to organize, to picket, and to engage in other peaceful activities. The Liberal Party believes that the citizens of New York during the postwar period must be on their guard against any attempt to infringe on these hard won rights without which our democracy could not survive.

I. The Liberal Party condemns attempts to impose an irresponsible censorship over plays and magazines by administrative or legislative decrees. It condemns any and all attempts to discipline, through demotions, discharges, transfers, or refusals to promote, those city employees who have had the courage to engage in constructive criticism of administrative practices.

II. The Liberal Party regards the problem of civil liberties as more than a problem of preventing infringement of traditional rights.

The people of a democracy have the right to hear all sides of controversial public issues and the government has a duty to encourage the vigorous discussion of these problems. The City of New York should take the initiative in stimulating constructive discussion of these problems with a view to encouraging the electorate to take an increasing part in their solution. The various educational agencies of the city and the city radio station should be fully utilized to that end.

III. The Liberal Party advocates that the City Council again permit the broadcasting of its proceedings over WNYC. When this was done at the beginning of the reorganized city legislature, the broadcasts were listened to by large numbers. They assisted materially in bringing the voters of the city into closer contact with their elected officials and with the day-by-day workings of the city government. There was no legitimate reason for the elimination of these broadcasts. In addition to the broadcast of the meetings of the City Council, the Liberal Party requests that the proceedings of the Board of Estimate and of important public hearings likewise be brought to the WNYC listening audience.

To correct certain abuses in the field of civil liberties, the Liberal Party specifically recommends:

1. The opening up of an increased number of places for larger meetings on the streets or in the public parks. At present these larger meetings are confined to comparatively few locations.
2. Continuation of the policy of non-interference by the police with lawful picketing.
3. Curbs on the arbitrary use of the licensing power to bar theatrical performances and magazines. The License Commissioner should leave such restrictions to the decision of the courts.
4. Elimination of the arbitrary use of the powers of the Mayor.



Public Libraries

FOR A MORE ADEQUATE SYSTEM OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES

1. The public libraries are a vital part of our cultural and civic life. For hosts of our children and adults, they constitute the chief or only source of book, magazine, and pamphlet literature. A modern, well-equipped and well-staffed library system is not a luxury, but a necessity in a democratic society. An adequate library system will be increasingly needed during the rapidly changing conditions of our postwar world.

Yet, when we turn to the library system of New York City, we find that on account of the lack of proper appropriations it is not in a position to provide essential services. The number of library centers is far too small to meet the needs of the reading public.

The founders of the public library system desired "to bring each resident of the city within a distance of not more than half a mile from a public library." This remains the accepted standard of service for all densely populated communities. Today hundreds of thousands in New York City live in areas without libraries. Many of the existing branch libraries are not equipped to give good service. They are poorly housed in rented stores; their stock of books is pitifully small, and they lack works dealing with the changing world to be faced in the postwar period. The library staff is also too small to serve the many patrons.

Fortunately, New York City is awakening to the vital need of developing a more adequate library system. In the 1944 capital budget, provision was made for twelve new branch libraries and for a substantial enlargement or reconstruction of eight existing libraries. In the 1945 capital budget, provision was made for

planning eleven more branches. Additions are likewise being planned for the central library buildings in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Queens. This is a real beginning, but it by no means provides a sufficient number of libraries to serve the population of the entire city.

While the books' budget for the three library systems in the city averaged \$460,000 in the pre-depression and early depression days (1928-1932), the recent books' budget has been \$110,000, or less than 11/2 cents per capita, against the recognized library standard for book purchase of 25 cents per capita. In 1944, of the fifteen largest cities of the country, New York stood thirteenth in expenditures for books and periodicals.

As for the library personnel, its salary schedule has been far lower than that in many other important cities of the country. In early 1945, New York stood eighteenth on the list of beginning salaries for professional librarians.

The result has been that New York City libraries have recently lost many of their best workers. During 1944, in the libraries in the Boroughs of Manhattan, Bronx and Richmond, 303 resigned from a staff of 869, while the resignations from the children's libraries decreased the staff from 146 to 63.

Declared Morris Hadley, President of the Board of Trustees of the New York Public Library, in early 1945:

"The disintegration of the staff of the New York Public Library, which began a few years ago, has gained momentum until at present it has become alarming. Vigorous measures are necessary if New York is to maintain good library service for its citizens. . . . New York wants people of higher caliber for its libraries than those satisfied to make a bare subsistence living. . . . The library system here can scarcely hope to maintain its position of eminence, if its losses and retrenchments continue. Services to outlying sections of the Bronx and Richmond Boroughs have had to be cancelled entirely with the withdrawal of two bookmobiles. Service within the city has had to be reduced with 23 branches closed parts of two days a week. There should be 80 young people's librarians; there are now 30. Six hundred fewer school classes

have been visited this year than last, while requests for their cooperation increase."

II. To meet these needs, the Liberal Party recommends:

1. That the postwar program for the building of new library branches be carried out without delay and that, following the construction of the proposed library branches, the building program be continued until every section of the city is adequately supplied with modern, efficient library buildings, conveniently located. Regional branches, well stocked with books, are especially needed to supplement the system of small branches on the one hand and central libraries on the other.
2. That the appropriation for new books for the library system be increased to one-half million dollars a year, and for the rebinding of books, to \$75,000.
3. That salaries of professional librarians be increased so as to equal those received by educational workers of comparable qualifications in other departments.
4. That New York State adopt a formula for the aid of libraries similar to that for the aid of education. We approve the recommendation of the New York Library Association that the state contribute 35 percent of the city's library expenses instead of the paltry sum of \$100 now paid for each library unit.



THE CITY AND THE VETERANS

Our country owes a great debt to those who have risked their all to bring total defeat to the Axis powers. Federal, state and local governments must all cooperate to see that these demobilized men and women get a square deal as they seek to resume their life as civilians.

I. The first responsibility for the welfare of the Veteran clearly lies with the federal government. Our city, however, must do its full part to assure the Veteran prompt and efficient assistance with his problems. The Liberal Party deplores utopian political schemes put forward in order to catch the Veteran vote which are of no real value to the Veteran and merely constitute a raid on public funds. The Veteran is entitled to important rights and privileges under existing federal and state laws. The City of New York has the responsibility to supply the Veteran with accurate information about these rights and the means by which he can take full advantage of them. But its duty extends far beyond this. The city must also cooperate with the Veteran in the solution of his problems of finance, health, employment, and rehabilitation.

Chapter 763 of the Laws of 1945 established a state-wide system of Veterans' service through the creation of a Division of Veterans' Affairs in the Executive Department. Under this law, our city will have a city director of Veterans' Affairs appointed by the Mayor with complete jurisdiction throughout the city. It will be the duty of this governmental agency to inform Veterans and their families about all matters pertaining to educational training, health, medical and rehabilitation facilities, and also about federal, state and local laws affording special privileges, employment and re-employment services and other related matters.

The city program for the Veteran must be built within the framework of the federal and state laws in order to avoid duplication, obtain the best facilities and personnel, and make it possible to establish a unified administration in the city where the Veteran may obtain information and assistance.

II. The Liberal Party recommends that the city supplement the provisions of the state law by setting up a Bureau in the Executive Branch of the city government, the Mayor's Office. This Bureau should consist of representatives from various city departments technically equipped to aid the Veteran. An administrative assistant or deputy commissioner from each of the Departments of Welfare, Hospitals, Health, Commerce, Education, Civil Service and the Law Department should be included in this Bureau. The Bureau should be headed by an eminent leader whose pronouncements will carry weight with all elements of the public.

There should be a common headquarters where both the state and city agencies are housed. This will enable the Veteran to obtain information and assistance without delay. The cooperation between the state and city agency will provide information on finances, as well as on medical, surgical, or psychiatric care. The Veteran will be able to obtain relief, if he is sick and disabled, or rehabilitation and vocational training. From this central bureau he may also obtain information on unemployment benefits, pension or retirement rights, annuities and grants of money. Information on preference in Civil Service and rights under the Military Law will be available, as well as assistance for the Veteran's family on the rights of widows and dependent children of Veterans.

The City Bureau will not duplicate the work of the federal and state agencies but will supply experts to work with these state agencies in assisting the Veteran and his family to solve their problems by the use of all city facilities. The responsibility of the city to its Veterans cannot be considered to have ended until they have made satisfactory adjustment to civilian life.



Consumers

CONSUMER PROTECTION

The safeguarding of the interests of the consuming public is now universally recognized as an essential responsibility of government. During the emergency of the war, the special Office of Price Administration (OPA) was set up by the federal government to control prices. It has done much to limit the upward spiral of prices. Yet, owing to the opposition of powerful pressure groups, its staff for the enforcement of price ceilings is far too small, and in certain regions its quality also leaves much to be desired. As a result, the "black market" flourishes in many parts of the country. In the New York region the situation in the case of several products is indeed deplorable.

I. The Liberal Party demands that OPA controls be continued during the reconversion period until they are no longer needed as a means of preventing inflation. It deplores the speed with which many of these controls are now being abolished. It believes that disaster can be avoided in the transition from the war to the peacetime economy only as the government exercises direction and control over the whole process of demobilization.

The Liberal Party demands that every department of the city government give resolute cooperation in the enforcement of federal regulations in our community during the period of transition.

II. As additional means of protecting the consumers of New York City, the Liberal Party recommends:

1. **Meat Grading:** The preparation of a city meat grading bill to be enacted by the City Council at such time as the federal meat-grading regulations, decreed as a war measure, are rescinded by the federal government.

2. **Consumers Bureau:** The organization of a bureau for the protection of the consumer against fraudulent practices in the fields of clothing, food, drugs, cosmetics and other commodities.
3. **Markets:** The building of an adequate number of new municipal retail markets in Manhattan, Bronx, Queens and Brooklyn and their efficient and honest administration. In all municipal retail markets, all public restrictions on the operation of business not required to safeguard the consumer and public should be eliminated. Past experience has shown that public retail markets can more than pay for themselves.
4. **Radio and Educational Agencies:** The full use of the municipal radio, the various departments of government dealing with consumer problems, and the educational system for purposes of consumer education.

III. **Cooperatives.** The Liberal Party also recognizes that co-operatives constitute one of the most effective means of protecting the consumers' interest. By setting yardsticks for fair prices and quality and by increasing purchasing power through the wide distribution of savings which result from their operation, the cooperatives have demonstrated that they are powerful means of holding down the cost of living. The Liberal Party therefore pledges to do all in its power to encourage their development in this great center with its millions of consumers.



Utilities

A PROGRAM FOR PUBLIC UTILITIES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ELECTRICAL POWER

The Liberal Party is concerned with the reasons and the remedies for the high price of electricity in New York City.

That electric rates in New York are high is not open to dispute. The Federal Power Commission estimated in 1942 that medium household consumption of electric power cost more in this city than in 190 other American cities of over 50,000 population. Indeed, in this report the Federal Commission showed that only 19 out of a total of 210 of these larger cities paid more for electricity than the people of New York City.

Typical bills for all types of consumers in cities of over 50,000 population are, in many instances, less than one-half the amounts charged for comparable service in New York.

Effective reduction of electric rates would not only result in savings to all consumers. It would also contribute to the comfort and convenience of residents by enabling them to use electricity for many additional purposes, as is already the case in many other cities. Lower rates for commercial electricity would also put New York City in a stronger position in its bid for new business enterprises.

The present high rates are all the more puzzling when one takes into account the ease of distributing electricity in this concentrated metropolitan center. Whatever differences exist in the cost of raw materials and the tax rate of our city are entirely inadequate to explain these high charges.

The electrical utilities in New York City, although enjoying monopoly rights, are privately owned and operated. Regulation

in the public interest is supposed to be provided by the Public Service Commission. That the present means of public control over these private monopolies is inadequate is shown not only by the high prices now suffered by the citizens of New York but also by the huge profits which these corporations have amassed. A report of the Power Authority of New York State in 1934 maintained that from 1907 to 1934 the consumers of the City of New York contributed to the owners of these utilities a profit of \$442,000,000 over and above a 7% return on their investment in property used in "the public" service.

In many cities and regions of the country, public ownership has led the way to low electrical rates and a more democratic control of electrical resources. Public ownership of all our electric utilities would, however, necessitate among other things state as well as municipal action. The Liberal Party believes that immediate steps can be taken by the city to improve the situation. It recommends:

1. Establishment of a Public Utilities Bureau of the City of New York to protect all the consumers and act as their day-to-day advocate.
2. Acquisition of the Staten Island Edison Company, to be run as a yardstick of public power for the purpose of reducing rates throughout the five boroughs and also to test the desirability of additional public ownership of electric and other utilities in the City of New York.
3. Provision for state legislation which will enable any city of the State of New York that may so desire to issue bonds for the purchase of electrical utility properties without counting such bonds as an encumbrance on the city debt limit.
1. **Functions of the Proposed Public Utilities Bureau.**

The existing Public Service Commission of the state has found it difficult to safeguard adequately the interests of the consumers. It has heretofore functioned in a quasi-judicial capacity—witness the fact that it has not initiated steps with a view to reducing the current high rates for electrical power in New York City. Rate investigations and other inquiries have been instituted for the most part only upon the extensive expression of public discontent. In

the hearings, moreover, the private company's side has always been fully prepared and presented, while the consumer's side has gone principally by default. Decisions and orders have rested, in consequence, upon one-sided records. Following the decision and order in any inquiry by the Commission, no adequate provision has been made for systematic follow-up of developments.

In the case of electricity, during the entire period of over thirty years the Commission has only in rare instances decided the fair value of the properties used in public service so as to afford a basis for rate-making. The public rights have been left obscure, and regulation has functioned without adequate standards, determination of facts and consumer representation.

Spasmodic efforts at direct and active consumer representation which have occasionally developed out of widespread public discontent have produced most of the instances of significant rate reductions. But except for these special instances, the consumers have been neglected and have been subjected to unreasonable rates, which not only have perpetuated injustice but also have stood in the way of community advancement.

To meet these general conditions the Liberal Party urges the passage of a law creating a New York City Public Utilities Bureau. This Bureau shall be empowered, in brief:

- a. To obtain and periodically to revise information on all important facts regarding rates, services, profits and property values of New York's public utilities;
- b. To institute proceedings for the reduction of unreasonable rates;
- c. To investigate and determine the desirability of, and formulate plans for, further municipalization of electrical utilities;
- d. To recommend such other legislation and activities by the city and state as may be necessary to safeguard the interests of the consumers of city utilities.
- e. The Bureau should be headed by a full-time City Commissioner and manned by an adequate staff of experts.

II. The Staten Island Yardstick.

At present, circumstances are peculiarly favorable for the purchase of the Staten Island Edison for operation as a pace-maker of electric service in New York City. The trustees of the Associated Gas and Electric Corporation have been under order of the Securities and Exchange Commission since August 13, 1942, to dispose of their indirect interest in the Staten Island Edison Corporation, pursuant to the Public Utilities Holding Company Act of 1935. A local law for the acquisition of "the public utility service or all of the capital stock" of this corporation by the city in 1942 was defeated on the ground that the proposed price was too high. The figures mentioned at that time were a minimum of \$14,000,000 and a maximum of \$16,500,000.

It is possible that the properties can now be bought for between \$6,500,000 and \$8,000,000. An expert on public utilities estimates that if the city paid \$8,000,000 for the property, the profits would be about \$600,000 a year, a margin sufficient to provide considerable reduction in rates and, to force down rates in other parts of the city. The experience of Cleveland, Ohio, has proved the efficacy of such a plant as a pace-maker.

The Liberal Party advocates the immediate passage by the City Council of a local law for the acquisition of the Staten Island Edison Company by the City of New York at the lowest possible price, the approval of this law by the Mayor and its submission to the people of the city for a referendum vote.

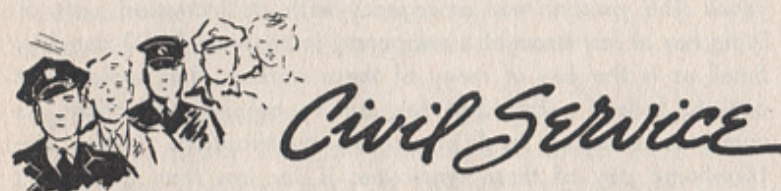
The Liberal Party further urges that all public services owned and operated by the city be administered by Public Corporations or Authorities, free from red tape and partisan political and bureaucratic control. The executives must be chosen on the basis of their competence and interest in the successful operation of the public service. There must be adequate opportunity for the consumer, the technical expert, the city employee and the community-as-a-whole to be heard.

III. Issuance of Bonds for Self-sustaining Utilities.

The present state law provides that no city can issue bonds to acquire new utility properties in excess of 10 percent of the

assessed valuation of its real estate. The Liberal Party believes that, whenever a municipality of the state desires to issue bonds for the purpose of acquiring a property which under private operation has demonstrated that it brings in enough revenue to meet all expenses and to pay the principal on its debt, such bonds should not fall under the 10 percent debt limit regulation. It therefore urges the passage of legislation allowing cities to issue bonds for revenue-producing enterprises outside of the city's regular debt structure.

Such legislation must take the form of an Amendment to Article 8, Section 7a of the New York State Constitution. It will require approval by a majority of each house of the State Legislature, followed by that of the people of the state in a referendum vote.



THE CITY AND ITS EMPLOYEES

The City of New York in its various departments, social services, and educational and other cultural activities employs normally about 190,000 civil service employees.

In harmony with the definite standards for government-employee relationships set forth by President Roosevelt in 1937, the Liberal Party believes that all of these city employees

Should be adequately paid for services rendered;

Should have real chance for advancement;

Should be fully protected against arbitrary and unjust acts on the part of departmental or other city officials; and

Should be encouraged to act collectively through organizations of their own choosing.

Despite a number of improvements during the past decade, these basic conditions, as we show below, are still far from being realized among the 190,000 employees of New York City.

I. Substandard Wages and Salaries.

The recently adopted budget for the year 1945-46 shows that 28,000 employees receive a base pay from \$960 to \$1500 a year; another 27,000 receive between \$1501 and \$2000; while another 22,000 obtain between \$2001 and \$2500. The average for the 55,000 workers in the first two groups is only \$28.00 a week, and for the 77,000 workers of these three groups is merely \$33.00 per week.

Many of these employees, heads of families, have served the city for twenty, thirty, and, in a few cases, for forty or more

years. The present war emergency with its increased cost of living has at last brought a temporary increase of \$1.00 per day. Small as is the pay of many of these workers, it is subject not only to federal withholding tax, but to pension deductions, to numerous voluntary and involuntary contributions. Hence the take-home pay of these employees is far less than the stated salaries, and in thousands of instances is far below the pay for corresponding positions in private industry.

It should be noted in this connection that the Department of Welfare allows a family of four up to \$1228.08 a year (or \$23.61 weekly), with extras for doctor and dentist bills, special diets and laundry, if necessary. Thus many city employees take home, after deductions, less than this Welfare allowance. This condition of substandard wages and salaries among many workers in our hospitals, libraries and other branches of city service has often been described as "shameful."

A. To improve these inadequate salary arrangements, the Liberal Party recommends:

- a. The establishment of a minimum entrance salary in the city employ of \$1500 a year.
- b. Continuation of the present war-time bonus as a permanent part of the basic salary of all city workers.
- c. Modification of the present rule of signing payrolls "under protest" which has resulted in many injustices and loss of rightfully awarded money to city employees.
- d. Readjustment of basic salaries of various grades and assignments after a scientific study of the various classifications.

II. Weaknesses in the Present Merit System.

Notwithstanding the promising advances made some years ago, the merit system of New York City now lags behind that of many other American cities. Policies governing the work assignments of employees as well as the rules and regulations pertaining to their promotion exhibit many inequities. Beginning salaries have been so low and promotions so far apart that the problem of labor turnover has become most serious. With the exception

of certain uniform services, the career system in New York Civil Service has so often led up blind alleys that many now consider the system a myth.

The chief weaknesses in the New York system arise from the tendency to regard the Civil Service Commission as a mere recruiting and examining body for civil service employees. As a result the Commissioners have not had real independence; they have been discouraged by the Administration from assuming leadership in the improvement of the Civil Service System, and they have been subjected to much interference in the carrying out of their duties.

In its 1944 report, the Civil Service Reform Association pointed the direction in which we believe New York City should move when it declared: "A civil service commission must be given authority over and responsibility for management of government personnel affairs from the initial phase of attracting talent, through the processes of selection, training and promotion, to separation from service. Such a changed concept demands a strong, well-equipped and adequately financed personnel agency, fortified by the backing and cooperation of other government departments, and particularly the Executive."

A. To bring about these reforms in personnel administration the Liberal Party recommends:

- a. The appointment of men and women to the Civil Service Commission without regard to their political affiliations, but with sole regard to their competence, integrity, independence of judgment, and their ability constantly to improve the system.
- b. Changes in existing procedures so that (a) Commissioners will be relieved of administrative operations, such operations to be conducted by competent executives; (b) the work of the Commission will be confined to deciding personnel policies, conducting investigations into the operation of the personnel system and hearing, and deciding appeals based on alleged arbitrary action of administrative subordinates, and similar broad activities; (c) responsibility for the execution of the policies and the administrative operation of the system will be

vested in a highly qualified personnel director aided by a competent professional and technical staff.

- c. That the Civil Service System be made more efficient through (a) the development of efficient departmental personnel officers; (b) the careful training of competent supervisors in the city's operating departments; (c) the setting up of uniform, equitable and adequate salary schedules, and uniform rules relating to absences, vacations, hours of labor, etc.—one of the greatest needs of our civil service system; (d) a proper classification of positions; (e) thorough research into the new and better civil service practices; (f) better methods of examinations, appointments and promotions; (g) the abolition of as many blind alleys in city service as possible and the establishment of a quota system for positions in higher grades to insure promotional opportunities; (h) the building up of the staff of the Commission with a view of adequately taking care of the constantly growing numbers of civil service employees; (i) the conscientious application of the rules governing the merit system in letter and spirit.

III. Collective Bargaining, Negotiating and Grievance Machinery.

Unfortunately, the City of New York has "muddled along" in its labor-management relations. It has never developed adequate collective bargaining machinery to handle affairs concerning the living standards and the general status and welfare of its employees. The need for this machinery is urgent.

Even when the wages and conditions of city employees are fixed by law or civil service regulations there still remains a wide area of administrative discretion in personnel matters. In fact the expansion of government activity into new fields like transportation, power, markets, housing and other undertakings heretofore considered wholly within the domain of private enterprise makes the use of administrative discretion imperative. Management must be free to make many decisions without having to get authority from the legislature or City Council and without having its hands tied by rigid statutes. If this necessary increase in the discretion of administrative officers is not to create an autocracy over labor,

collective negotiation must be extended for the protection of the rights of employees.

Here also the practice of New York City lags behind that of certain other cities. For example, the Court of Common Council of the City of Hartford, on October 24, 1944, passed an ordinance affirming "that employees of the City of Hartford are authorized and empowered fully and freely to associate themselves in organizations of their own choosing for their mutual benefit and advancement" and that "no employee shall be punished, disciplined or discriminated against, nor shall his status, position, salary, advancement or any other rights be affected in any way by reason of his membership in any such organization, or his lawful activities therein."

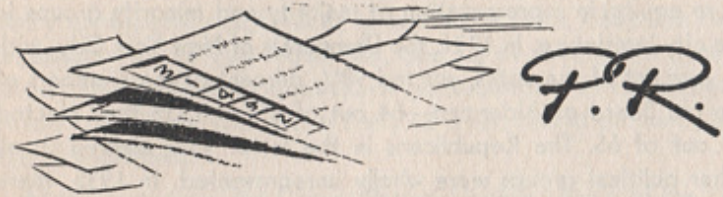
For a few years good machinery was in operation in the Welfare Department under Commissioner William Hodson. During this period the Department of Welfare worked out a system for the hearing of grievances which gave both individual employees and representatives of groups of employees a full opportunity to be heard, with right of appeal to an Appeals Board composed of members not employed in the Department. Unfortunately this machinery has now been largely scrapped, and only in a few departments does an adequate machinery for the adjustment of grievances exist.

A. To bring the employee-management practices of New York City in line with generally recognized progressive standards, the Liberal Party recommends:

- a. The development of adequate machinery on a city-wide level and on departmental levels for the adjustment of grievances in order to provide regular means of reducing arbitrary actions on the part of the administration, of raising the morale and efficiency of the employees, and of preventing unnecessary wasteful recourse by aggrieved employees to officials outside of the administration, and unacquainted with the situation in which they are called upon to intervene.
- b. The development of uniform personnel policies in each branch of the city service in cooperation with the employees, and joint

discussion between employees and management on all questions of policy affecting employee interests.

- c. The recognition of the right of civil employees to organize, and official policy that encourages such organization.
- d. Positive prohibition of discrimination against employees on account of union membership, leadership, or on account of race, color, religion or national origin.
- e. In the case of all employees included in the civil service system, provision for collective negotiation in all areas in which the city and its administrators possess powers over labor conditions.
- f. That democratic procedures be used in all employee-management relationships of the public service of New York City.



PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

The Liberal Party favors the continuance of the system of proportional representation as applied to the election of members of the New York City Council.

Instituted by vote of the people in 1936, the system of proportional representation has amply proved its many advantages.

I. Proportional representation, in the first place, has rendered the vote cast by the average voter for member of the City Council far more effective than under the old system of voting. Before the inauguration of proportional representation, the voter cast his ballot for only one candidate. If this one candidate failed to receive a plurality of votes in his district, the citizen voting for him failed to have his vote counted in the election of any candidate. Under proportional representation, on the other hand, each citizen has the right to vote in the order of his preference for as many candidates as he wishes. If his first choice fails, his ballot can be transferred to his second, third or fourth choice instead of being wasted. While only between 55 percent and 67 percent of the valid votes cast from 1929 to 1935 for the old Board of Aldermen were effective in electing a candidate, about four-fifths of the valid votes cast for Councilmen under proportional representation have been thus effective. In this way, proportional representation has encouraged the voter to take a more active part in the selection of city legislators, has strengthened the voice of the average citizen in his government and has made for more effective popular and democratic control.

II. The Liberal Party, in the second place, favors the system of proportional representation because this system leads to a

more equitable representation of majority and minority groups in the city legislature. In 1931, the Democrats of New York City, with 65 percent of the votes, elected 98½ percent of the members of the old Board of Aldermen—64 out of 65; in 1935 they elected 62 out of 65. The Republicans in the latter year elected 3; all other political groups were wholly unrepresented. In 1935, there were only 18,348 Democratic votes for each Democratic alderman elected, as compared with 149,135 Republican votes for each Republican alderman. Under the system of proportional representation, it is impossible for a political party with only two-thirds of the votes to obtain a virtual monopoly of the elected councilmen. Every considerable group of voters in a borough has a chance of electing one of its own number. This is in line with the spirit of democracy and of political equity.

III. The Liberal Party favors the system of proportional representation as a means of raising the calibre of city legislators. Under the old system of elections, a candidate for the city legislature was usually chosen by the political boss of the aldermanic district as a reward for activity in behalf of the district political machine. He was rarely known outside the district and his chief energies were spent in strengthening the district machine. His renomination depended almost wholly on his loyalty to the district boss. Under these conditions it was difficult to induce able, public-spirited citizens to run for the city legislature, or to elect them if nominated.

While the present membership of the City Council leaves much to be desired, the Council under proportional representation has contained since 1937 a number of men and women of independence, intelligence and social vision who would have had little or no chance of winning under the aldermanic district system. The Council has served as a forum for the discussion of the vital problems before the city, and has possibilities for far greater usefulness in the future than in the past.

As a means, therefore, among other things, (1) of increasing the effectiveness of the vote for city councilmen and of thus strengthening the democratic process; (2) of giving an oppor-

tunity to majority and minority groups for a more equitable representation in our city legislature, and (3) of raising the quality of our city legislators, proportional representation in the election of city councilmen, the Liberal Party believes, should be continued and strengthened.

At the same time, the Liberal Party warns the people of the city that the mere existence of proportional representation does not automatically ensure the election of men and women devoted wholly to the public interest. It is an opportunity, not a guarantee of good results. Only as the great mass of our citizens actively participate in the nominations and the election of candidates of ability and integrity who are dedicated to a progressive program of action in every department of city government, will the people of the city be assured of a Council of which the city may be justly proud. The party is also of the belief that the friends of proportional representation must conduct a far more vigorous educational campaign than in the past regarding the workings and values of the proportional representation system, and must at the earliest possible moment consider constructive plans for improving the mechanics of the system's operation and for extending it to the election of other city and state officials.



Taxation

A GOOD GOVERNMENT TAXATION AND FINANCE PROGRAM

The future taxation and fiscal policy of the City of New York presents a problem as difficult as it is important. As the various parts of the foregoing program of the Liberal Party indicate, our city has many urgent needs. It needs a huge program of slum clearance and good housing, an enriched and diversified educational system for both children and adults, more and better public libraries, a better medical service with more hospitals and health centers, a greater number of parks and playgrounds plus a system of public school summer camps, better transit facilities, improved standards of living for many of its 190,000 employees, and a variety of social services. All these services are required if the 7,500,000 men, women and children of the City of New York are to enjoy minimum essentials for a good life. The Liberal Party also favors the maintenance of the five-cent fare.

For years the people of the City of New York have been calling for these improved municipal services; for years they have been told that they must be denied these improvements because of lack of funds. The city, it was declared, had to depend primarily on real estate taxes for its revenues; there was a constitutional limit on the amount of taxes which might be obtained from real property within the city; we now have comparatively little borrowing power left; the city could not impose on real estate a tax greater than two percent of its assessed valuation, beyond that required for service of the city's indebtedness. The taxes which the city could impose other than the realty tax were determined not by the people of the City of New York, but by the legislators of the State of New York, and the yield of

these authorized taxes was small.

During the nineteen-twenties, assessed values of real estate went steadily up and it was possible for the City to collect annually an additional \$25,000,000 or so from real property without changing the tax rate.

Beginning with 1930, this process shifted into reverse. The assessed valuation of real property went steadily down. On the other hand, expenditure for various city services increased. Moreover, beginning with 1930 there was a succession of State laws which required the expenditure of great sums of money. The peoples of the municipalities were required to contribute part of these increased costs, as in the case of old age relief, etc., although no State revenues were made available to them to meet their share of such costs. Real estate was thus required to incur a heavier burden at a time when the income of real estate owners, on the whole, was seriously reduced.

In the years 1924-28, for instance, the amount received from realty tax levies averaged between \$300,000,000 and \$400,000,000. By 1932, the real estate levy had reached the high mark of \$517,000,000. During the last few years, the yield has been around \$470,000,000. On the other hand, the income enjoyed by real estate dropped sharply from 1929-32, and reached a low in the 1932-36 period, from which there has since been substantial recovery. In addition, the assessments are being sharply cut by court action over which the city has no control.

In the postwar period, the demand for additional revenues is likely to increase. One of the items causing such an increase will be salaries for city employees who will have returned from military service.

Another item leading to an increase in the city budget will be the debt service connected with a larger expenditure for a variety of public works such as the Liberal Party has defined in its program. Much of this capital expenditure should be borne by the state and federal government, but a large share—probably one-half—will have to be provided by the city with a consequent increase in the debt service.

In addition to this, whenever a new hospital, a new school or other public structure is built, the city has to pay not only for the construction of the building, but for the maintenance of the structure after it is erected. In the postwar period, as has been emphasized, the City of New York will also be confronted with demands for expanded services and for more adequate compensation for many city workers.

The Liberal Party believes, on the basis of the above facts, that additional revenues must be obtained for an expanded city budget. In connection with the capital budget for postwar public works, it wishes to voice its approval for the undertaking of a flexibly planned program of useful public works, to be pushed with vigor during periods of unemployment and contracted in periods of comparative prosperity. It believes, likewise, that governmental agencies on the municipal level should be prepared to take part in an expanding economy in addition to trying to give a lift to our economy through increased public works and services during days of depression.

How should these additional revenues be obtained? In general, the Liberal Party is convinced:

1. That the aim should be, in obtaining additional revenues, to secure them, to as large an extent as is practicable, from taxes based on ability to pay. We are opposed to regressive taxes of all types.
2. That at present the state and federal governments are in a position to impose and collect taxes based on ability to pay to a far greater extent than is the city government.
3. That it is therefore imperative that city, state and federal tax systems be integrated, and that the city obtain a larger proportion of its revenues from taxes now collected by the state and federal governments.
4. That, in deciding what additional taxes should be imposed for needed social purposes, an effort should be made to impose those taxes which burden to the least extent the lower-income group in the population. Of course, care must be taken that

the taxes on any given group are not so high as to cause a serious migration of an industry or a commercial activity from the city, thus reducing the city's ability to obtain sufficient revenue to carry on.

5. It is recognized that amounts of taxes which place a great burden upon a people during a period of unemployment and low national income can be borne without great difficulty during a year of full employment and high income. Consequently, the Liberal Party realizes that the problem of obtaining sufficient city as well as state and federal revenue is bound up intimately with the problem of maximum employment of our material and human resources.

In the light of this set of principles and long-run policies, the Liberal Party urges that an immediate attempt be made to increase the city's revenues through the following means:

I. Greater State Aid in Behalf of the City's Social Services.

The need for this was acknowledged by the last State Legislature which, after much agitation on the part of progressives, increased state aid to education. It was acknowledged by the Moore Commission, which has recommended that the state and federal governments bear 80 percent of the city's expenditures for home relief, old age assistance, and aid to dependent children and the blind, instead of, as in the past, 40 percent of home relief expenditures, 50 percent of aid to dependents, and 75 percent of expenditures for old age assistance. The Moore Commission has likewise recommended that the state distribute each year to the cities of the state \$100,000,000 in substitution for all presently state-collected shared taxes, New York City to receive as its share \$45,500,000. The city has heretofore received an indeterminate amount from year to year, which in 1944 amounted to around \$38,000,000.

These recommendations are in the right direction, but do not go nearly far enough. The state should turn over to the city a larger proportion of taxes collected from incomes and inheritances, taxes based on ability to pay as well as a larger share of the gasoline and cigarette taxes. It should further

increase its assistance to the city for educational services and should, among other things, increase the number of scholarships to the youth of the state, part of the scholarship money to be made available to the state's colleges and universities.

2. **Federal Aid.** The Liberal Party believes that the federal government should supply to New York City as well as to other municipalities an increasing share of the city's expenditures for housing, health, education and other needed social services. The Federal government is in the best position of any government agency in the country to collect taxes based on ability to pay. If the city imposes an income tax on its residents, the latter may escape this tax, in whole or in part, by moving without the city limits. If the state imposes an income tax, residents of the state, perhaps with greater difficulty, may evade the tax by taking up their residence in another state. But if the federal government levies an income tax, it can collect from a person residing in any state in the union. During the last generation, the federal government recognized the need of federal assistance to states and localities in numerous social services. If the city is to solve its growing financial difficulties, federal grants should be given from progressive forms of taxation and other revenues to the cities of the country for specific social purposes. Federal contributions may be made on a per capita basis and should be related to minimum educational, health, and other standards. Such grants should be accompanied with a minimum of federal control.

The federal government has, in late years, contributed important sums to cities for the development of public works, particularly with a view to reducing unemployment. In making grants in the future, the government should appropriate funds not only for the construction of public works, but for their maintenance after construction.

3. **Interim City Taxes.** The Liberal Party holds that ultimately such increases in revenues from state and federal sources would be sufficient to meet the budgetary needs of the city.

It recommends that until such time as these revenues are made available the city be empowered to raise, for the purpose of slum clearance and good housing and the support of the other proposals contained in the Liberal Party program, from tax sources now utilized exclusively by the federal and state governments, a sum of not less than seventy million dollars a year. These tax sources include:

- a. Special taxes, imposed for war emergency.
- b. Those taxes, now levied by New York State, which are yielding far in excess of state budgetary requirements and have resulted in substantial surpluses.

In addition to these taxes, the city should also be authorized to increase its business tax from one-twentieth of one percent to one-tenth of one percent.

*If you wish more information or want to help the Liberal
Party, communicate with or visit the nearest office.*

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Candidate for Mayor

✓ ✓ ✓

Hon. Joseph D. McGoldrick


Candidate for Comptroller

✓ ✓ ✓

Judge Nicholas M. Pette

Candidate for President
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✓ ✓ ✓

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